THEOSOPHY

VOLUME 67 MARCH, 1979 NUMBER 5

In Theosophical opinion a Spirit is a Ray, a fraction of the Whole; and the Whole being Omniscient and Infiite, Its fraction must partake, in degree, of the same abstract attributes. Man's "Spirit" must become the drop of the Ocean—the "I am one body, together with the universe itself" (I am in my Father, and my Father is in me), instead of remaining the body only. He must feel himself not only a part of the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer, but of the Soul of the Three, the Parabrahman, Who is above these and is the vitalizing, energizing and ever-presiding Spirit.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

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THE THEOSOPHY COMPANY

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I *To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or color;*

II *The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and*

III *The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.*

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The unerring Witness is standing in the center of your being, powerful, mighty and supreme! His is the final testimony. His is the court of Last Appeal.

—MIZRA AHMED SOHRAB

THEOSOPHY

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NO NEED TO WORRY

> And now, O Teacher of Compassion, point thou the way to other men. Behold, all those who knocking for admission, await in ignorance and darkness, to see the gate of the Sweet Law flung open!
>
> —*The Voice of the Silence*

> "Among thousands of mortals a single one perhaps strives for perfection, and among those so striving perhaps a single one knows me as I am."
>
> —KRISHNA, in *The Bhagavad-Gita*

IN the wide area which may be thought to lie between the suggestions of these quotations is the work of the Companions. "Behold," the *Voice* says, all those who long to learn the truth, yet Krishna could find but one in thousands who would move in his direction. Where are the multitudes? a student may disconsolately wonder to himself. Here we are, filled to overflowing with the store of wisdom to which Karma has led us, yet the world remains as incurious as ever. One might think, now that the Movement is launched and has spread around the world, that Lodge Rooms would be bursting at the doors with earnest inquirers, yet only the faithful come, although now and then one or two are added to our number. While it is true that we have not been fully instructed in "the meaning and times of the cycles," shouldn't there be at least a few more who knock for admission?

It is not that people are failing to knock on doors. The "Lo here, lo there" fantasy is a widespread psychic infection, and sects with pretentious prophets have never been more numerous. The Spiritualism of the nineteenth century seems reborn as the search for gurus, while "spiritual techniques" are now advertised in supermarkets as well as in the new magazines and tabloids that continue to multiply in number. There may be some positive value in all this—concealed behind so much lurid confusion and careless misinformation—but, unlike the cleanly focused attention Theosophy requires, this changing tide of "seeking" seems by contrast a mass phenomenon—the sort of "awakening" accepted by large numbers of people, and which draws the condescending attention of social psychologists and journalistic commentators.

Remarking the similar outbreak of a little more than a century ago, H.P.B. wrote in the first chapter of *Isis Unveiled*:

> *Human nature is like universal nature in its abhorrence of a vacuum.* It feels an intuitional yearning for a Supreme Power. Without a God, the cosmos would seem to it but like a soulless corpse. Being forbidden to search for Him where alone His traces would be found, man filled the aching void with the personal God whom his spiritual teachers built up for him from the crumbling ruins of heathen myths and hoary philosophies of old. How otherwise explain the mushroom growth of new sects, some of them absurd beyond degree?

Spiritualism was the lever used by Madame Blavatsky to raise before the world the ancient Theosophical teachings concerning immortality and the states after death. But Spiritualism in this sense was no sectarian clique of ghost-hunters and devotees of the saccharine revelations of mediums, but represented rather the longings of common folk who sought the promise of a life beyond the grave and a sense of meaning in their own lives. That hunger still exists—indeed has grown and spread—and while the attractions of psychic phenomena still gain the attention of some, a vague sophistication has led to wondering at another level—the quest for self and self-understanding—although a search much diluted by hedonistic habits and self-centered conceptions of progress.

In short, the psycho-dynamics of the Kali Yuga have by no means retired into the wings of history. Yet there is no doubt a

long-term historical significance in the decline of public interest in physical science, accompanied by the onset of novel forms of psychism, indicating a change in focus of the race mind. It is again as H.P.B. remarked in the last century concerning the phenomena of Spiritualism: "whether these phenomena contain *per se* or not the *proof of immortality,* demonstrating as they do the existence of invisible and spiritual regions where other forces than those known to exact science are at work—they are shown to lie beyond the realm of materialism."

But from the "vacuum" of having nothing substantial to believe in to the deliberate striving of which Krishna speaks may be a long road indeed. Early in this century a wise observer of human nature and a deep student of Theosophical teachings wrote to a friend:

> The Karma of many is such as to leave no mental or physical doors open directly, yet even they may be reached indirectly through the efforts of others in affinity with them, who may take hold and find the way. What we should do is rather to convey the information that the opportunity to understand and apply Theosophy comes under Karma to the very few, not because it is withheld from anyone, but because their prevailing tendencies are not of a nature to leave the mind open to the consideration of new truths, or to enable them to take advantage of the ways and means afforded. This comes from neglect or misuse of opportunities in former lives, in many cases. . . . In our daily lives we mingle with people as they are. This enables us to show human sympathy with their life, to understand their conditions, without getting involved in either, while in indefinable ways giving the impression of the serious side of life and the necessity of real knowledge as to its meaning.

The Theosophical Movement, then, will never be a "crusade" in the grand and romantic sense. It has its links with the personal side of human life in the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation, especially the latter, and those who have not the habit of intellectual or moral compromise, when drawn to initial inquiry through some personal event, or pain or grief, may find themselves ready to undertake more serious study, and eventually to find the Path. Yet Theosophists, as such, may never be counted as really numerous during the years ahead to which our wonderings are able to reach. The world will doubtless at some future time find itself ready to adopt a pure religion—something like, perhaps, the simple Buddhism of the past—and we may recall that H.P.B. pre-

dicted that *"the religion of the ancients is the religion of the future."* The rapid spread of Buddhist conceptions during the past ten or fifteen years has been an impressive development, and while tantric teachings have a marked emphasis—by reason of the American demand for "results"—we may remember that every door opened in the direction of actual knowledge admits the inevitable quota of skandhic tendencies which belong to the race by karmic heritage, at each stage of human development. But religion, however philosophical in its roots, is not Theosophy. The shaping of world beliefs is the task of the "Manava intellect," and may safely be left to that order of intelligence spoken of on page five of Mr. Judge's *Ocean of Theosophy.*

Yet students of Theosophy have a part even in this—a part given ample definition by both H.P.B. and Mr. Judge. In one of his articles, "What Our Society Needs Most," Mr. Judge wrote at some length concerning the best means of affecting the thought of the time:

> What we most need is such a Theosophical education as will give us the ability to expound Theosophy in a way to be understood by the ordinary person. This practical, clear exposition is entirely possible. That it is of the highest importance there can be no doubt whatever. It relates to and affects ethics, every day life, and consequently every act. . . .
>
> High scholarship and a knowledge of metaphysics are good things to have, but the mass of people are neither scholars nor metaphysicians. If our doctrines are of any such use as to command the efforts of sages in helping on to their promulgation, then it must be that those sages—our Masters—desire the doctrines to be placed before as many of the mass as we can reach. This our Theosophical scholars and metaphysicians can do by a little effort.

What better way could there be to provide the religions of the future with a broad, philosophical base? One great purpose of the Theosophical Movement, as H.P.B. said in her closing words in the *Key,* is to "burst asunder the iron fetters of creed and caste." She added:

> . . . the West will learn to understand and appreciate the East at its true value. Further, the development of psychic powers . . . will proceed healthily and normally. Mankind will be saved from terrible dangers, both mental and bodily, which are inevitable when that unfolding takes place, as it threatens to do, in a hot-bed of selfishness and all evil passions.

There has undoubtedly been some success in this direction, for which—oddly enough—the terrible war of the 1940s is in some ways responsible, since it brought so many into greater awareness of the awesome heights of Eastern philosophy; and the influence of the Theosophical movement has played an immeasurable part in the general recognition of the wisdom of the East.

Where does the true strength of our Movement lie? It lies, as always, in the strength and true-hearted devotion of the few. Its influence, while requiring workers and transmitters, goes far beyond the ordinary means of assessment since there is the flow which takes place on the plane of mind and heart, linking together all mankind in unknown and unimagined ways. Students do not speak of this often, since it is virtually a secret of occultism and would soon be regarded as a way of making "claims," yet the law of Brotherhood is as much a reality as the all-pervasive Akasa, and there are currents in that tenuous medium which reach the corresponding centers in others who are open to sublime suggestion. The work of the Nirmanakayas might even be broadened by the humble efforts of students who follow Mr. Judge's advice in "Each Member a Centre."

The same idea is emphasized by H.P.B. in her first Message to the American Theosophists:

> Each man should strive to be a centre of work in himself. When his inner development has reached a certain point, he will naturally draw those with whom he is in contact under the same influence; a nucleus will be formed, round which other people will gather, forming a centre from which information and spiritual influence radiate, and towards which higher influences are directed.

In harmony with this is what she said to Mr. Judge, repeated by him in his *Lucifer* (June, 1891) article, "Yours Till Death and After":

> "We are not working merely that people may call themselves *Theosophists,* but that the doctrines we cherish may affect and leaven the whole mind of this century. This alone can be accomplished by a small earnest band of workers, who work for no human reward, no earthly recognition, but who, supported and sustained by a belief in that Universal Brotherhood of which our Masters are a part, work steadily, faithfully, in understanding and putting forth for consideration the doctrines of life and duty that have come down to us from immemorial time. Falter not so long as a few devoted ones will work to keep the nucleus

existing. You were not directed to found and realise a Universal Brotherhood, but to form the nucleus for one; for it is only when the nucleus is formed that the accumulations can begin that will end in future years, however far, in the formation of that body which we have in view."

Both H.P.B. and W.Q.J. were well aware of the presence, during the time they were on the scene, of every sort of imitator, diluter, and exploiter, along with half-taught enthusiasts able to collect an audience, and others who have a psychic inspiration which proves infectious for large numbers of people. While there may be some truth in what they teach or preach, a particular kind of discrimination is required to tell the true from the false. H.P.B. wrote informingly of these things in "Modern Apostles and Pseudo-Messiahs," giving a sound test of the high-sounding rhetoric of those who borrow fine words to dress their claims in the peacock feathers of altruism. Toward the end of this article, she said:

> To know a very little of the philosophy of life, of man's power to redeem wrongs and to teach others, to perceive how to thread the tangled maze of existence on this globe, and to accomplish aught of lasting and *spiritual* benefit, is to annihilate all desire or thought of posing as a heaven-sent saviour of the people. For a very little self-knowledge is a leveller indeed, and more democratic than the most ultra-radical can desire. The best practical reformers of the outside abuses we have known, such as slavery, deprivation of the rights of woman, legal tyrannies, oppressions of the poor, have never dreamed of posing as Messiahs.

Mr. Judge wrote in the same vein, but making another point, in his *Path* (May 1890) article, "Occultism: What Is It?":

> Not only in the Theosophical Society, but out of it, are tyros in Occultism. They are dabblers in a fine art, a mighty science, an almost impenetrable mystery. The motives that bring them to the study are as various as the number of individuals engaged in it, and as hidden from even themselves as is the center of the earth from the eye of science. Yet the *motive* is more important than any other factor.
>
> These dilettanti in this science have always been abroad. No age or country has been without them, and they have left after them many books—of no particular value. Those of today are making them now, for the irresistible impulse of vanity drives them to collate the more or less unsound hypotheses of their predecessors, which, seasoned with a proper dash of mystery, are put forth to the crowd of those who would fain

> acquire wisdom at the cost-price of a book. Meanwhile the world of real occultists smiles silently, and goes on with the laborious process of sifting out the living germs from the masses of men. For occultists must be found and fostered and prepared for coming ages when power will be needed and pretension will go for nothing.

Here, in idea if not in words, the idea of the nucleus is made paramount. The nucleus begins with a small gathering of those who have become inwardly convinced of the reality of the supersensuous life, and its creative power ultimately to transform the world, and who are filled with growing realization that the desired result cannot be brought about in any other way. The nucleus is never really large since it is made up of those who qualify in the terms of which Mr. Judge spoke to one of his correspondents: "He who does not feel himself irresistibly impelled to serve the Race, whether he himself fails or not, is bound fast by his own personality, and cannot progress until he has learned that *the race is himself* and not that body which he now occupies." (*Letters That Have Helped Me,* p. 54.)

This is a time of year when the thoughts of students naturally incline to Mr. Judge and his work. It is a time when his expressions seem to reach the mark with more than ordinary force, and when his understanding and sympathies with that scanty band of companions most poignantly touch the heart. The advice of Mr. Judge, we come to see, is practical wisdom for all seasons. The following was certainly the keynote of his own life and work—of one who was given so much to "worry about," by an uncaring world:

> There is never any need to worry. The good law looks out for all things, and all we have to do is our duty as it comes along from day to day. Nothing is gained by worrying about matters and about the way people do not respond. In the first place, you do not alter people, and in the second, by being anxious as to things, you put an occult obstacle in the way of what you want done. It is better to acquire a lot of what is called carelessness by the world, but is in reality a calm reliance on the law, and a doing of one's own duty, satisfied that the results must be right, no matter what they may be.

The Voice of the Silence is both a book for aspirants who struggle with the conditions of a dark age, and a manual which comes to us out of the Satya Yug of true ideals. The Satya Age will come

again. The time will come when all will recognize glimmers of truth from afar and come knocking for admission. We work for that day, no matter what may lie between. It is a work now undertaken by the few—those who would become "living germs." These are also the ones who strive for perfection. They strive to be like Krishna by following his example as well as they can. They, too, learn to be indefatigable in action.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

A friend of old time and of the future—as such does William Q. Judge appear to me, as doubtless he does to many others in this and other lands.

The first Theosophical treatise that I read was his *Epitome of Theosophy*: my first meeting with him changed the whole current of my life. I trusted him then, as I trust him now, and all those whom he trusted; to me it seems that "trust" is the bond that binds, that makes the strength of the Movement, for it is of the heart. And this trust he called forth was not allowed to remain a blind trust, for as time went on, as the energy, steadfastness and devotion of the student became more marked, the "real W. Q. J." was more and more revealed, until the power that radiated through him became in each an ever-present help in the work. As such it remains today, a living centre in each heart that trusted him, a focus for the Rays of the coming "great messenger."

—ROBERT CROSBIE

THE POWER OF THE INITIATORY

PLATO defined the soul as "a self-moving unit." For this reason, a moral act is a self-moved act. This is surely the meaning behind "self-induced and self-devised" effort.

Throughout history mankind has attempted to regulate behavior on the basis of external rules. The actions of individuals have been guided mainly by formal codes intended to restrain the lower mind. But what is the virtue in behavior controlled by legislative decree or by prescription from a priest? Of what lasting value is the "morality" demanded by scripture or church, or motivated by fear? Enforced morality, it seems evident, runs counter to the nature of man, and must ultimately fail. And just so long as it is attempted—whether in the form of threat, promise, dogma, edict, convention, or even habit—no man will accomplish inner growth. A scientific code of morality would be one based within man himself—in his higher manasic perceptions of natural law.

Sociologists are beginning to suspect that the nature of man is such that he must *want* to do right; also, that he must understand the reason for what he does before he can be considered a moral individual. It was for this reason, no doubt, that in *The Ocean of Theosophy* (p. 97) Mr. Judge declared that "the scientific and self-compelling basis for right ethics" is to be found only in the teachings of Karma and Reincarnation, and of the Immortal Ego in man. These doctrines reach into and arouse the attention of the self-moving Soul, inspiring right action from within.

But the soul, say the materialists, does not exist, and how, they ask, could ethical principles deriving from unknown regions beyond the brain be scientific? Science, they say, applies only to those relations which conform to the carefully observed facts and laws of life which have been demonstrated and proved by sense perception. The philosopher, however, recognizes another science—the Science of the Supreme Spirit—that wisdom referred to in the *Bhagavad-Gita* by Krishna in saying that "of all sciences I am the knowledge of the Adhyatma" (the highest spiritual

knowledge). In this system, only that virtue is genuine which is self-induced, and only that morality is scientific which proceeds from the spiritual root of man's being. In the science of the Supreme Spirit, "scientific" and "self-compelling" action are one —all other forms of morality being imitative and of psychic origin.

Parents and teachers are beginning to manifest great respect for the dignity of the human being. If to this could be added a knowledge of the Immortal Ego which reincarnates periodically upon earth, the error of believing that children can be forced or frightened into good behavior would be avoided. By reason of the nature of the human soul, not even a Buddha or a Christ can enforce morality. Compulsion eliminates the moral aspect of the act. As said in *Isis Unveiled* (II, 590):

> The adept can control the sensations and alter the conditions of the physical and astral bodies of other persons not adepts; he can also govern and employ, as he chooses, the spirits of the elements. He cannot control the immortal spirit of any human being, living or dead, for all such spirits are alike sparks of the Divine Essence, and not subject to any foreign domination.

This age-old doctrine of the Immortal Ego—the being not subject to foreign domination—exposes the fallacy of all predestinarian and deterministic philosophies. *Things and events,* say the teachers, can be predetermined by one who knows, but not the *choices* of the self-conscious Spark. It is written, therefore, that "for him who is on the threshold of divinity no law can be framed, no guide can exist." *(Light on the Path,* p. 14). Christhood or Buddhahood, the goal of every human being, is reached by becoming one with the LAW of the universe, by making that Law his own. Parents and teachers, therefore, would do well to allow children, as they grow up, to spread their wings—even to make mistakes. The normal child, if forced against his will, is certain to rebel, or else cower under compulsion, which weakens his spiritual nature. Both the moral coward and the rebellious profligate are in part the production of ill-advised parents and teachers. The course a teenager takes when he begins to make his own decisions is likely to be determined, primarily, perhaps, by the example of his parents—and also the quality of earlier discipline—whether he has been *told* to do something with no explanation of why, whether at each step he has been encouraged to think and reason for himself.

As a rule, teachers lack or do not take the time to reason with their pupils. Yet all children should be encouraged to cultivate "the power of the initiatory." To *educate* means "to draw out." The true educator, therefore, is aware of the existence in every child of a responsible Self, a being whose perceptions need to be awakened. And what better mental environment could be provided for this purpose than one where universal ideas are examined and discussed? Doctrines such as Karma and Reincarnation, teaching an endless pilgrimage of learning through countless civilizations and even worlds, are inwardly native to the Immortal Ego. When heard they may sink into and awaken the Soul. They may stir the within-outward flow of the Spirit, and invite the spiritual Will. They may augment and guide the urge toward self-direction. Children, then, should be exposed to—but not forced to engage in—worthwhile endeavors, such as music, art, literature, mathematics, philosophy, and the biographies of heroes whose noble actions touch the heroic element in the Soul.

Morality will be established in the world only when men "begin acting from within, instead of ever following impulses from without." *(The Secret Doctrine,* Vol. I, p. 644.)

A New Day

The hope of earnest members of the Theosophical Society is in the future, and in a brotherhood which includes within its bonds many living men, who, though unseen by the ordinary man, are powerful and wise enough to affect the progress of the race. They are the elder brothers of the great Human Brotherhood. They do not seek the applause of men nor a vindication for their policy. We have the courage to wait for the visible appearance in a higher and better civilization of some of these glorious Adepts. And that consummation we are approaching. The outer materialistic prophets of a civilization based on selfishness scoff at such a theory, but we, being firmly convinced of progress from within by repeated incarnations of the immortal Ego, must be preparing for a new Day.

—William Q. Judge

THE MYSTERY OF ALL TIME

THE inner light which guides men to greatness, and makes them noble, is a mystery through all time and must remain so while Time lasts for us; but there come moments, even in the midst of ordinary life, when Time has no hold upon us, and then all the circumstance of outward existence falls away, and we find ourselves face to face with the mystery beyond. In great trouble, in great joy, in keen excitement, in serious illness, these moments come. Afterwards they seem very wonderful, looking back upon them.

What is this mystery, and why is it so veiled, are the burning questions for anyone who has begun to realise its existence. Trouble most often rouses men to the consciousness of it, and forces them to ask these questions when those, whom one has loved better than oneself, are taken away into the formless abyss of the unknown by death, or are changed, by the experiences of life, till they are no longer recognisable as the same; then comes the wild hunger for knowledge. Why is it so? What is it, that surrounds us with a great dim cloud into which all loved things plunge in time and are lost to us, obliterated, utterly taken from us? It is this which makes life so unbearable to the emotional natures, and which develops selfishness in narrow hearts. If there is no certainty and no permanence in life, then it seems to the Egotist, that there is no reasonable course but to attend to one's own affairs, and be content with the happiness of the first person singular. There are many persons sufficiently generous in temperament to wish others were happy also, and who, if they saw any way to do it, would gladly redress some of the existing ills—the misery of the poor, the social evil, the sufferings of the diseased, the sorrow of those made desolate by death—these things the sentimental philanthropist shudders to think of. He does not act because he can do so little. Shall he take one miserable child and give it comfort when millions will be enduring the same fate when that one is dead? The inexorable cruelty of life continues on its giant course, and those who

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NOTE.—This article was first printed by H. P. Blavatsky in *Lucifer*, September, 1887.

are born rich and healthy live in pleasant places, afraid to think of the horrors life holds within it. Loss, despair, unutterable pain, comes at last, and the one who has hitherto been fortunate is on a level with those to whom misery has been familiarized by a lifetime of experience. For trouble bites hardest when it springs on a new victim. Of course, there are profoundly selfish natures which do not suffer in this sense, which look only for personal comfort and are content with the small horizon visible to one person's sight; for these, there is but little trouble in the world, there is none of the passionate pain which exists in sensitive and poetic natures. The born artist is aware of pain as soon as he is aware of pleasure; he recognises sadness as a part of human life before it has touched on his own. He has an innate consciousness of the mystery of the ages, that thing stirring within man's soul and which enables him to outlive pain and become great, which leads him on the road to the divine life. This gives him enthusiasm, a superb heroism indifferent to calamity; if he is a poet he will write his heart out, even for a generation that has no eyes or ears for him; if he desires to help others personally, he is capable of giving his very life to save one wretched child from out a million of miserable ones. For it is not his puny personal effort in the world that he considers—not his little show of labour done; what he is conscious of is the over-mastering desire to work with the beneficent forces of super-nature, to become one with the divine mystery, and when he can forget time and circumstances, he is face to face with that mystery. Many have fancied they must reach it by death; but none have come back to tell us that this is so. We have no proof that man is not as blind beyond the grave as he is on this side of it. Has he entered the eternal thought? If not, the mystery is a mystery still.

To one who is entering occultism in earnest, all the trouble of the world seems suddenly apparent. There is a point of experience when father and mother, wife and child, become indistinguishable, and when they seem no more familiar or friendly than a company of strangers. The one dearest of all may be close at hand and unchanged, and yet is as far as if death had come between. Then all distinction between pleasure and pain, love and hate, have vanished. A melancholy, keener than that felt by a man in his first fierce experience of grief, overshadows the soul. It is the pain of the struggle to break the shell in which man has

prisoned himself. Once broken then there is no more pain; all ties are severed, all personal demands are silenced for ever. The man has forced himself to face the great mystery, which is now a mystery no longer, for he has become part of it. It is essentially the mystery of the ages, and these have no longer any meaning for him to whom time and space and all other limitations are but passing experiences. It has become to him a reality, profound, indeed, because it is bottomless, wide, indeed, because it is limitless. He has touched on the greatness of life, which is sublime in its impartiality and effortless generosity. He is friend and lover to all those living beings that come within his consciousness, not to the one or two chosen ones only—which is indeed only an enlarged selfishness. While a man retains his humanity, it is certain that one or two chosen ones will give him more pleasure by contact, than all the rest of the beings in the Universe and all the heavenly host; but he has to remember and recognise what this preference is. It is not a selfish thing which has to be crushed out, if the love is the love that gives; freedom from attachments is not a meritorious condition in itself. The freedom needed is not from those who cling to you, but from those to whom you cling. The familiar phrase of the lover "I cannot live without you" must be words which cannot be uttered, to the occultist. If he has but one anchor, the great tides will sweep him away into nothingness. But the natural preference which must exist in every man for a few persons is one form of the lessons of Life. By contact with these other souls he has other channels by which to penetrate to the great mystery. For every soul touches it, even the darkest. Solitude is a great teacher, but society is even greater. It is so hard to find and take the highest part of those we love, that in the very difficulty of the search there is a serious education. We realise when making that effort, far more clearly what it is that creates the mystery in which we live, and makes us so ignorant. It is the swaying, vibrating, never-resting desires of the animal soul in man. The life of this part of man's nature is so vigorous and strongly developed from the ages during which he has dwelt in it, that it is almost impossible to still it so as to obtain contact with the noble spirit. This constant and confusing life, this ceaseless occupation with the trifles of the hour, this readiness in surface emotion, this quickness to be pleased, amused or distressed, is what baffles our sight and dulls our inner senses. Till we can use these the mystery remains in its Sphinx-like silence.

"THE GITA"—INFORMAL ESSAYS

I

WHY should the *Gita* provide so warlike a setting for discourses on spiritual philosophy? Perhaps because there is no genuine "spirituality" unless there has been a struggle in and through the great frictions of material experience. Moreover, individual feats of arms have always been used to signify the attainment of fearlessness, magnanimity toward the defeated, and an unswerving purpose. Wars were not always quite as they are now, and probably in ancient days the "blood-bath" was far from being so meaningless as is today's technically-advanced mass slaughter.

The whole of the Mahabharata epic is the story of a war. Truly, all men must fight wars of some kind, and is not warfare, then, a universal symbol? But the *Gita* is not concerned primarily with the "facts" of the battles of the Kurus and the Pandus. It deals, rather, with the question of how the war should be fought—and, most important of all, *why* it should be fought.

It is hard, and perhaps not altogether necessary, to rid ourselves of the notion that great men are usually "good fighters." H. P. Blavatsky, espousing so many principles commonly associated with a pacifist's creed, still found it natural to speak of Theosophy as having "a severe battle to fight for recognition," and Judge's tribute at the death of his preceptor sought also to draw just homage to the fire of H.P.B., the "lion-hearted colleague" and "warrior soul." Of her greatest work, *The Secret Doctrine,* W.Q.J. wrote, "it is a mine, and is the magazine for warrior Theosophists."

It is natural that we should wonder why King Duryodhana persists in fighting against Bhima and Arjuna after he has just stated, unequivocally, that his own forces "are not sufficient" for winning the issue of Kurukshetra. Here is the first clue, perhaps, that the *Bhagavad-Gita* was never meant to be read literally, and that its symbolism penetrates the story from the outset. No good General will fight when he feels his forces to be insufficient—he will seek

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NOTE.—This is the first of a series of articles on *The Bhagavad Gita* originally printed in THEOSOPHY, Volumes 38 and 39.

to employ strategy. But Duryodhana, the "intelligence" represented by sensuous habits gained from his "father" (the body), does not really fight for *victory* anyway, as Arjuna does, and therefore does not know what strategy is. Victory is a consciously selected goal, and Duryodhana lacks the faculty of taking the long-term view.

Duryodhana fights only for the reason that it is his nature to *resist* control. Somehow, too, the prospect of defeat does not seem terrifying to Duryodhana—he will simply fight until the five Pandava princes regain their kingdoms. Perhaps he will fight to the end only because he does not possess sufficient imagination to know how to surrender. Even if only in the interest of conservation of energy, then, it is certainly desirable for Arjuna to settle the war quickly. For his "enemy" blunders on through a useless campaign until sufficient Will, manifesting in the Arjuna encouraged by Krishna, gains command over the field.

It must be clear that the warfare on Kurukshetra is viewed in a different light by the representatives of the two armies. Arjuna feels that he is in a serious engagement. He can appreciate the sensation of loss which will strike him the moment he enters into actual battle with his army of distant and close relatives—that is, the components of his own emotional habits. He can conceive of what victory will be and he knows a little of what temporary defeat is, too, for he is just returning after a long banishment from his kingdom. But the opposing army, made up of animal impulses, and too-highly-personalized longings, will *thoughtlessly* express itself in opposition as long as possible.

Are not all man's habits like this, whether we call them good or bad? The process of evolution is that of turning "bad habits" into good ones, and of making "good habits" into patterns of action still more meaningful. But in each case it is tremendously difficult to break the cycle of repetition. The force of Duryodhana's army is the Force of Inertia, described by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine* as the "greatest of all occult forces." Yet a force can always be re-channeled by a being of sufficient intelligence. The Individual Soul is not merely a "force," but the creator, mover and re-shaper of forces. Thus Arjuna *has* the power to completely rout the army of Duryodhana, if he so wills; but this power becomes manifest only when he is ready to take the fateful step which sunders him from past habits of too-highly-personalized thinking.

It is interesting to speculate on the reasons why Duryodhana is portrayed as the first one to inspect the battlefield—Krishna and Arjuna do not discuss the battle situation until later. Here we might borrow a phrase from a later chapter: "All creatures act according to their natures." *Duryodhana has nothing else to do except walk up and down Kurukshetra.* His is the automatic pacing of the professional soldier, who does not fight as most men fight.

Arjuna, on the other hand, has been engaged in preparing himself for this battle, and into his preparation has gone thought and planning for a permanent victory. He has not been content to fight from day to day, casually or spasmodically, as Duryodhana might, because he knows the temporary victory of a battle means nothing, and that the establishment of a permanently satisfactory rule over the Kingdom is what is needed. With Arjuna's victory, too, will come many responsibilities. It has been recognition of this fact, possibly, that has delayed Arjuna so long in making his struggle for the throne. His *own forces* were "insufficient," until he could grasp that his rule, once attained, must be kept un-ending, and until he desired order and harmony and moral growth so strongly that he could no longer bear to see the Kingdom handicapped by the rule of his rival.

The first portion of Arjuna's apology for hesitation on the battlefield introduces a point of great philosophical and psychological significance. Surveying his personal habits, upon which he has become seriously dependent—those habits connected with Dhritarashtra, the body—he says that he "cannot fight." Yet he has come the full distance across a kingdom to wage this battle, and has gathered around him the best available warriors as part of his fighting force. *Within* him are strong forces for, and strong forces against, fighting. Arjuna is at the symbolic balance-point reached also by every human being who arrives at a time of internal struggle. Arjuna knows that the fight has to be fought, but here, as always, the last minute is the time when renunciation of one's only-recently-outgrown past seems opposed by all the forces of nature. The moment for dissipation of all that cohered in past habits inevitably calls forth a spasm of the old energies. No preparation for this moment is ever entirely adequate, for it will never guarantee success. So Arjuna is confronting, in his own way, Bulwer Lytton's "dweller on the threshold." He is seeing, enhanced by the moment of renunciation, all of those energies which incarnated, too blindly, in personality-gratifying experiences.

In Chapter Two, Krishna, whose advice has been asked at this troublous juncture, replies very strangely for one who is thought to represent the "Higher Self." Among the reasons he advances for Arjuna's forthright entrance into battle is that "mankind will speak of thy ill fame as infinite . . . if thou wilt not perform the duty of thy calling and fight out the field." Yet what does the Higher Self care about public opinion? Or is it only public opinion to which Krishna is referring?

Perhaps there is that in every man which wishes to see Arjuna succeed in battle, for all men are veterans of similar warfares. One man who succeeds, succeeds for all. One man, failing in his battle, disheartens all others. This must be the "ill-fame" which Krishna mentions. So every disciple, while facing innumerable forms of opposition in his gradual separation from unthinking submergence in a life of impressions and sensations, will discover much force of popular opposition, while at the same time he will feel a subtle force of approval.

Further stretch of the imagination can bring us to see that Bhishma and Drona, and all the "sons" or personifications of Dhritarashtra and Duryodhana *are themselves ready to see Arjuna take the field,* for if there is receptive intelligence within the body and emotional nature of man, it must be awaiting, so to speak, the impression of a fully conscious being's moral energy. Such an impression will enable it to leave its repetitive rounds of habit response.

Arjuna must attempt to assess his own weakness when assuming the responsibility for leading his forces into battle. Perhaps it is for this reason that Krishna does not spare his disciple in castigating him for the Weakness of Doubt. There are many kinds of doubt, and many pitfalls for each doubter. One does not really need to doubt, for instance, the wisdom of a teacher, any more than he has to blindly believe in that teacher's authority. Man's receptivity to the quality of doubt is actually in exact proportion to the blind belief he has already indulged—a feeling of too little security frequently drives men to accept any kind that is offered, even such as is purely illusory.

Arjuna, like all doubters, is doubting himself; doubting that his struggle is worth the sacrifice. This is really the *only* doubt.

All others are but ramifications of it. It may be suspected that the Adept is one because he neither doubts nor believes, because he refuses to live in those jumbled areas of emotion which sweep away the power of concentration. The Adept or Mahatma does not *know "everything,"* in one sense, and yet in another he does, for he knows it is the Law of Life to proceed always on the basis of what is known, without resorting to any of the usual forms of belief. This is the essentially scientific spirit of pure Theosophy, or, we may say, the theosophic spirit of pure Science. When one's "beliefs" are reasonable, there is no longer need nor room for doubt. Only when beliefs *remain,* unexamined and unimproved, are they a source of instability in the mind.

It must often seem to students that it "ill-becometh" one like Krishna to appeal to Arjuna's pride, and to speak so often of Arjuna's worldly reputation as a warrior, but is it not rather self-respect and honor of which Krishna would remind him? If pride were actually aroused, Arjuna would be a sorry candidate for Krishna's instruction. Yet there are two kinds of pride—that pride we associate with the word "foolish," which means an over-estimation of one's capacities, and then, that pride which can be equated with self-respect and honor. Krishna calls Arjuna to proceed on the basis of the Supreme Spirit—an impersonal spiritual principle within all things which makes the usual consciousness of self seem foolish, and shows that only consciousness of All-Self is in accord with reality. Krishna appeals to Arjuna *as an individual being,* which implies that individual awareness of Self is a key to human evolution.

On this basis, it should not be difficult to proceed on the assumption that *belief in oneself* is an absolute pre-requisite to an adequate moral sense. First, we cannot believe in others unless we can believe that we ourselves are capable of the goodness which we may expect to see manifest in them; and secondly, belief in oneself is the only protection against animosity. How could others disturb us if our belief in ourselves—in the Self—is firm and strong?

If we *distrust ourselves,* we are thrown into constant perturbation. Dissatisfactions with self cannot be conquered within unless we have sufficient self-respect and "pride" in our own moral capacity; otherwise, we externalize our conflicts. Human beings are

driven to assert their moral stature, and if no other ways remain —if by actions they are not able to claim moral stature—they can only derogate others in the endeavor to show that, in some respects, they may be worse than themselves. Therefore, it is correct to say that the man who hates, hates only himself, while the man who can genuinely respect his own moral integrity does not need to be suspicious of others nor to derogate them.

All of the spiteful encounters between human beings have roots in a lack of self-respect, and, therefore, it may be an over-simplification to say that men should "think nothing of themselves" in order to be fully "moral" in their relations to others. At least, it would be just as true to state that the moment we are able to think of ourselves without an underlying cynicism we shall have more respect for our relationships with other humans. Carrying this line of speculation a step further, we may imagine that those who show the greatest callousness towards the lower orders of nature are also those who do not have much faith or "pride" in themselves. If man finds little to respect in his own forces of animal energy, he cannot be expected to deal intelligently with other manifestations of the same energy in the animal or plant worlds.

A teacher in an experimental school recently summed up all attitudes toward human experiences as either being "anti-life" or "pro-life." Certainly we cannot have a general feeling of regard for other forms of intelligence unless we have that regard for our own. Respect for, and belief in, our own integrity, our own qualities of heart and feeling, and our own powers of mind is a part of that universal sense of respect or *intelligent love* of all creatures, for which the great sages are renowned.

letters • questions • comment

Why would an ego choose an incarnation of suffering, since it is implied that this happens during the birth vision?

This question seems to be based on a passage in *The Key to Theosophy,* which is given a rather loose interpretation by the questioner. H.P.B. wrote (p. 162-63):

> As the man at the moment of death has a retrospective insight into the life he has led, so, at the moment he is reborn on earth, the *Ego,* awaking from the state of Devachan, has a prospective vision of the life which awaits him, and realizes all the causes that have led to it. He realizes them and sees futurity, because it is between Devachan and rebirth that the *Ego* regains his full *manasic* consciousness, and rebecomes for a short time the god he was, before, in compliance with Karmic law, he first descended into matter and incarnated in the first man of flesh. The "golden thread" sees all its "pearls" and misses not one of them.

Also referred to by implication in the question is the following by Mr. Judge in *The Ocean of Theosophy* (p. 97):

> Individual unhappiness in any life is thus explained: (*a*) It is punishment for evil done in past lives; or (*b*) it is discipline taken up by the Ego for the purpose of eliminating defects or acquiring fortitude and sympathy. When defects are eliminated it is like removing the obstruction in an irrigating canal which then lets the water flow on. Happiness is explained in the same way: the result of prior lives of goodness.

It would follow from what is said in the *Key* that during the time of the birth vision, the Ego, having briefly regained his full stature as a Manasic being who has voluntarily undertaken a Promethean labor—to bring light to the world, to elevate all creatures that lack the light of mind—finds justice and wisdom in the decree of Karma concerning the next birth that will be his. This isn't exactly "choosing," but, in the case referred to by Mr. Judge—when the hardship or suffering is "taken up by the Ego for the purpose of eliminating defects or acquiring fortitude and sympathy"—a choice has surely been made. That choice

may result from the constant spirit of the reincarnating ego, throughout the vicissitudes of lives lived in the past—the resolve to live to benefit mankind, and to become able to do so.

We have many practical analogies of such a decision. The youth who wants to become a fine swimmer will deliberately subject himself to rigorous training. He will swim the year round, sometimes perhaps in quite cold water, in order to develop stamina and to increase his determination. Virtually all the sports involve suffering. There is no excellence without some kind of sacrifice. While it may be said that athletics make a poor sort of example to illustrate high egoic decision, we might recall that Heracles, the founder of the Olympic Games, would give no reward for high achievement save a crown of scented leaves—the laurel wreath—and he pointed out that he had never taken payment for his services. Diodorus Siculus relates this.

A modern writer, Costa de Loverdo, tells us in *Gods with Bronze Swords* that Heracles exceeded his great Labors in the example he set:

> One yet greater offering did Heracles bring to all ages and all the world, an idea that has worked and will work a transformation of humanity itself. This really won immortality for Heracles: the determination to be heroically of use. He thirsted for renown through service. And the name of Heracles lives because he lived up to it. . . . Heracles never claimed to be a god on earth. He was passionately human, serviceable, direct. But earth became his steppingstone to godhood. Heracles showed what one man can do. He earned divinity.

With this as the goal, some suffering is no great price to pay. In the birth vision the Ego knows this and is reconciled, taking a firm position out of regard for the end in view.

on the lookout

A Time of Far-reaching Change

During the closing years of the last century both H. P. Blavatsky and William Q. Judge often referred to the fact that humanity was on the verge of a great change, one that would alter every aspect of human relations and undertakings. In his *Ocean of Theosophy* (1893) Judge spoke of alterations in "every system of thought, science, religion, government and society," and H.P.B. predicted "a great change" in "the psychic idiosyncrasies of humanity." In "Esoteric Character of the Gospels" she said that an important cycle was reaching its end, an event marked by "famines"—"another name for destitute pauperism, and the famished multitudes of the proletariat"; and in "The Fall of Ideals" she observed that far-reaching alterations in human character were not always "the work of centuries," but could come about through swift-acting forces such as "wars, speculations, epidemics, the devastation of famines or religious fanaticism." The New Cycle, she affirmed in the Introductory of *The Secret Doctrine* (I, xliv), would mean, she said, that "not a few accounts will be settled and squared between the races."

Worldwide Food Shortages

Little serious attention was then given by the world to these momentous prophecies. Today, however, evidences of their comparative fulfillment are everywhere before our eyes. Not least of the changes going on in an increased moral awareness. An article by Patricia Flynn in the *Los Angeles Times* for July 16, 1978, reveals extreme disillusionment with mass production techniques in agriculture by pointing to the mounting statistics of want and hunger in the "developing" countries where these methods are being applied. A meeting of the UN World Food Council in

Mexico City last June produced figures which the *Times* writer summarizes:

> —43 countries now suffer acute shortages;
>
> —455 million of the world's people are malnourished (an increase of 55 million during the past eight years);
>
> —One-third of the world's children die of malnutrition and related diseases before the age of five.

Big Farmers Profit, People Go Hungry

This ominous trend, Patricia Flynn shows, is directly related to industrialized agriculture and the activities of enormous corporate farmers collectively identified as "agribusiness." While the moral contradictions exposed by this article will come as no surprise to readers of *Food First* by Lappé and Collins, the *Los Angeles Times*—one of the most influential newspapers in the United States, with a circulation in the millions—reaches a very large audience. At least some change in outlook may be expected to result from comparisons such as the following:

> In one country after another—Mexico, Brazil, Guatemala, Colombia—agriculture is being modernized at unprecedented rates. Nevertheless, the statistics on hunger and malnutrition in Latin America look worse every year. Today, one in five Latin Americans suffer from severe malnutrition; in Brazil alone, 44 million are malnourished.
>
> If, in fact, modernization combats hunger, why these figures in the face of significant food production increases and stepped up investments in agriculture? The problem is that the bulk of new investment seeks the high returns realized through the production of export crops like soy beans, sugar and cotton. But these crops, big money-makers on the world market, do not feed the local population.

Wealth Accumulates, Men Decay

Within the past ten years, Patricia Flynn reports, the fertile valleys of northwest Mexico (Sonora and Sinaloa) have been turned into agricultural regions resembling California's Central Valley. Rich Mexican farmers cooperate with U.S. agribusiness to plant fruits and vegetables for export to the affluent United States, with the result that staple food production is in decline. Mexico has had to import more and more of the food her people eat. "Last year 1.5 million tons of corn and 1.4 million tons of wheat were imported." And between 1950 and the present, Mexican landless peasants have increased from 1.5 million to more than five million. Conditions are similar in Brazil, where shortages of staple foods have multiplied the malnourished and

hungry. The loans to assist agriculture in Brazil have gone to farmers who grow food for export, not to the small farmers who produce the beans, corn and cassava eaten by the poor. The *Times* writer concludes:

> Throughout Latin America, wherever agribusiness flourishes, land use and starvation wages intensify hunger. In some areas, U.S. corporations are directly involved in using some of the most fertile land for export rather than staple food crops. Most of Central America's banana plantations are controlled by three agribusiness giants—Castle & Cook, Del Monte and United Brands. In addition to growing bananas for the U.S. and European markets, some of the companies also let thousands of acres lie uncultivated, held for future expansion.

Hastening Ills

> Under such conditions, human exploitation abounds. In Brazil, as in other countries, the minimum wage in agriculture is rarely enforced, and day laborers in the southern soybean, sugar and coffee region earn as little as 50 cents for a 12-hour workday. A 1976 study showed that in Guatemala a shocking 66% of the families who work on sugar plantations have an income that is not adequate to meet minimum nutrition needs. And those who work on coffee plantations are even more destitute, with 88% of the families unable to afford a minimum diet.
>
> It is clear that the powerful landowners and agribusiness companies are not concerned with giving farm workers a fair share of the wealth they produce, nor with protecting the rights of the small farmers to their land, nor with meeting the food needs of the local population.

"We Eat Oil"

It is well known that the application of industrial methods in agriculture, during the past twenty years, has been responsible for driving numerous unemployed farm workers to the cities, exacerbating already unmanageable urban problems of crowding, housing, unemployment, crime and juvenile delinquency. The cities of the United States, it has been pointed out, are on the verge of bankruptcy, with New York the "leader" in this trend. It was not long ago that the "bigness" of cities was regarded as a symbol of modern progress, but today, increasingly, growth in urban population is recognized as the portent of disaster. This change in attitude has now many protagonists, with E. F. Schumacher its best-known advocate and pioneer. Urbanization, he

showed over and over again, has been the direct result of *"the availability of cheap and plentiful fossil fuels."* Writing on "City Patterns" in *Resurgence* for May-June 1977, Schumacher said:

> Modern agricultural technology as practiced in the United States, in Western Europe, in the areas affected by the "green revolution," and in many other parts of the world is essentially oil-based. Its tremendous success in raising productivity-per-person was achieved by the introduction of intensely oil-based technologies—mechanization and, even more importantly, chemicalization; in terms of physics and chemistry modern people eat a variety of foodstuffs; in terms of economics, we eat oil.

No Way Out

On the effect of technological agriculture on the peasants of South America, he quotes a Latin American report:

> Fidel Escalante, 56, did what hundreds of thousands of Latin Americans are doing each year: He packed his few belongings and set out to start life over again in the big city. But his new life is hardly better than his old one: occasionally he gets work as a bricklayer, and his home is a hovel in the "misery belt" of shanty towns that ring [every big city]. "I'd like to go back to my village," he says, "but there is no use talking about it. I'd just have to return here. *There is no way out.*"

That, Schumacher said, is "the truth of the matter"—*there is no way out.* He added:

> In the many years of work in or for developing countries, I have come to the conclusion that the problem of economic misery cannot be solved in the cities; if it can be solved at all then it is only by revitalization of life in villages and in small and medium-sized towns. The rural areas cannot hold their people because they are culturally and (in most cases) economically stagnant, retrogressive, decaying. All over the world it can be observed that the range of activities in these areas is diminishing; non-agricultural activities are dying out; what they used to make themselves they now receive in cellophaned packages from the big city; and even agriculture itself tends to become reduced to monoculture.

Human Needs Ignored

> The forces that move people into the slums of monster cities and conurbations are not found in the attractiveness of cities but in the decay of life outside them. . . . The developments

> of the last hundred years, and particularly of the last thirty years, have given us a technology *incapable of meeting human needs*. Today, it is no exaggeration to say that it is "child's play" to land a man on the moon, but it is beyond the wit of modern man to abolish the housing shortage. That which used to be beyond human ingenuity—like moon landings—has become attainable, and that which used to be taken for granted—like adequate food, shelter, clothing and "culture"—has become *unattainable for the majority of mankind.*

Cities Must Shrink

A few years ago Dr. Schumacher declared that the sudden increase in the cost of petroleum by the oil-producing countries was really a blessing in disguise, and should be recognized as such, since it is stimulated awareness that the industrialized world had been living on the capital of non-renewable fuels. The price increases showed that the end of this cycle of wasteful "prosperity" was plainly in sight. Broad justification of this opinion is found in the current predictions of Howard T. Odum, ecologist and originator of "energy economics," who declares that the cities of the world must now shrink, since it will no longer be possible to feed their enormous populations. Spiraling energy costs make transport of food to urban areas prohibitively expensive. Summarizing Odum's thinking, a writer in *Community Planning Report* (for July 3, 1978) said:

> The shrinking of cities will come as part of a natural trend toward more energy efficiency—the social characteristic that becomes essential for survival in an age of diminishing energy availabilities. In the era that we are now ending, the individual, the company, or the nation that competed most successfully was the one that was able to use the most energy the quickest, with little thought or need for efficiencies. As a system goes into a declining energy mode, however, the person, company or nation that competes most successfully is the one that stresses utmost efficiency, recycling, lack of waste.

Gradual Change or Catastrophe

> Much like the shifting of the earth's crust and other natural changes of condition, the transition to this different social state may come about gradually, through a series of small economic and social jolts, or it may be accompanied by a massive economic and social unheaval—depending on how well the nation's leaders are able to understand and plan for what is

happening. Their responses, thus far, do not augur well for the "soft landing." . . .

Moving to this new social state will not be a "going back," Odum stressed, because we will still have access to sophisticated and relatively low-energy technologies such as communications, computer applications, and others.

The "back-to-the-earth" movement—which has actually been quietly under way now for several years—will also not be a return to the family farm, but will reflect and incorporate many of the urban patterns that now pervade society. Depending on how the nation reacts, the agricultural sector could either be characterized by small individual farms sharing equipment and labor on a cooperative basis, or by a new feudal state in which all the land is owned by a few individuals or corporations who rent out the land or let others work it on a share-cropper basis.

Karma of Aquisition

Reports from around the country—especially from California, Oregon and Minnesota—show a growing awareness of these alternatives. The Summer Newsletter of ITLA (Intermediate Technology in Los Angeles) presents a statement prepared by the California Office of Appropriate Technology (by Jerry Yudelson and Sim Van der Ryn) which says:

We are beginning now to enter a period of increasingly difficult resource shortages, inflation, and joblessness, along with lack of access for many persons to basic social and economic resources, much of it brought by a runaway, cheap-energy technology which has fundamentally unbalanced our social, economic, and political systems, in the attempt to provide material affluence for everyone.

To recognize the limits to growth which exist on this planet, we need to educate ourselves about alternative goals and directions, and to cure ourselves from our cheap-energy addiction. What we need is a technology more appropriate to the transition period we are in than that which now is conventionally used by our society. To develop and use such a technology, we will need to make major changes in personal lifestyles and social goals.

Schumacher's Vision

This reference to "goals" draws attention to the underlying moral forces which have such deep appeal to the coming generation, giving evidence of the most significant meaning of the tran-

sition now in turbulent progress. This was the central theme of Schumacher's work. In an article honoring him in *Environment* for last May, Hazel Henderson said:

> By concentrating on the values and goals of economic activities, Schumacher saw the possibilities of transforming unsustainable industrial modes of production into production methods that are biologically sound, build up soil fertility, and create health, beauty and permanence. From his knowledge of the true reality of our species' situation on this planet came Schumacher's prescription of evolving "small-scale, non-violent, intermediate technology—technology with a human face," as Schumacher called it, "so that people have a chance to enjoy themselves while they are working . . . in new forms of partnership in managing enterprises," and in such pioneering forms of common ownership as that of the Scott-Bader Commonwealth of which he was a director.

Illusory Claims of Keynes

Karl Polanyi, economist brother of the philosopher-scientist, Michael Polanyi, was an important contributor to the awakening heralded by Schumacher, giving balance and historical perspective in relation to modern economic enterprise. Hazel Henderson writes:

> As Polanyi has shown, this monstrous abstraction of the free market as resource allocator is a rare aberration in human history, associated only with the 200-hundred-year-old history of the Industrial Revolution. . . . With his understated humor, Schumacher debunked the tenet of industrialism that the soundest foundation of world peace would be universal prosperity. "One may look in vain," he wrote [in *Small Is Beautiful*], "for historical evidence that the rich have regularly been more peaceful than the poor." He chided John Maynard Keynes for his "trickle-down theory" of economic development. He also criticized him for his ambivalent view that economic progress could be achieved by employing the baser human drives of greed and avarice but, that once we had all become rich, then perhaps our grandchildren could return to the sure and certain principles of religion and traditional virtue: "that avarice is a vice—the exaction of usury a misdemeanor and the love of money is detestable."
>
> Schumacher summed up the paradoxical Keynesian message thus: "Ethical considerations are not merely irrelevant—they are an actual hindrance, for foul is useful and fair is not." In other words, the road to heaven is paved with bad intentions. Rather, Schumacher suggested the foundations of

peace cannot be laid by universal prosperity "because if attainable at all, it is attainable only by cultivating such drives of human nature as greed and envy.

Ethical Foundation

While Schumacher's London-based Intermediate Technology Group brought assistance to many underdeveloped countries, his most impressive success was in awakening the "over-developed" world to the pathology underlying the spectacular triumphs of industrialism. This awakening takes many forms. In an article in the March-June *North Country Anvil* (published in Minnesota), the poet, Gary Snyder, speaks of the ecological revolution as having brought modern man to realization of his need to live once more in harmony with the sun and the green which surrounds him:

> We once more know that we live in a system that is enclosed in a certain way; that it has its own kind of limits, and that we are interdependent with it.
>
> The ethics or morality of this is far more subtle than merely being nice to squirrels. The biological-ecological sciences have been laying out (implicitly) a spiritual dimension. We must find our way to seeing the mineral cycles, the water cycles, air cycles, nutrient cycles, as sacramental—and we must incorporate that insight into our own personal spiritual quest and integrate it with all the wisdom teachings we have received from the nearer past. The expression of it is simple; gratitude to it all, taking responsibility for your own acts; keeping contact with the sources of the energy that flows into your own life. . . .

Galbraith's Utopia

Meanwhile, in a spirit of fun, John Kenneth Galbraith, author of *The New Industrial State* and *The Affluent Society,* and former U.S. Ambassador to India, contributed to the August, 1978 *Atlantic* what he calls "The North Dakota Plan," intended, he explains, to relieve all international tensions, eliminate Great Power rivalry, finish ideological conflict, remove cause for quarrel over international boundaries, reduce armies and navies, and minimize political ambition. Quite evidently, there is no longer much reverence for the Nation-State. Mr. Galbraith makes this clear:

> The plan I have developed accomplishes all of these things. It invites, as world government does not, the support of all who affirm that small is beautiful. . . .
>
> In the North Dakota Plan the map is the message. Every needed reform in international relations can be achieved if national boundaries are simply redrawn so that all countries are the shape and size of North Dakota.
>
> All boundaries would then follow the lines of latitude and longitude. These are known or can be discovered without difficulty; accordingly, there could no longer be any boundary disputes.

More Sovereignty from Less

The theme of small-is-beautiful is elaborated in some detail, with playful irreverence for practical considerations. Mr. Galbraith ends by dealing with the crucial issue of sovereignty:

> I come to one final point. The question has been asked in the United States in these last weeks if the North Dakota Plan will not impair national sovereignty. On this we have the assurance of Ronald Reagan, former and future presidential candidate and one of my very own colleagues as a founding pillar of Americans for Democratic Action. Sovereignty, Governor Reagan has pointed out, is a good thing. The Panama Canal Treaties were opposed as a bad thing. They will diminish the most fragile form of sovereignty, which is sovereignty we never had. But the North Dakota Plan, in contrast, enormously enhances the number of sovereign states. There will, by long division, be 27 in Western Europe, 120 in North America, 123 in the USSR, and 85 in Antartica alone. Thus will the sum total of sovereignty in the world be increased. No good American can be against that.

Only among people who have outgrown it could "national sovereignty" be made the butt of such disarming ridicule. On the other hand, the theme of regionalism, combining local responsibility with local control, is among the most serious and determined of the reforms of the transition age.

Murder by Accident

Science for last Aug. 25 presented a macabre account of the power of suggestion. David Phillips, a sociologist of the University of San Diego in La Jolla, reports that when murders and suicides are extensively publicized in newspapers, a wave of fatal airplane accidents follows. The greater the publicity, the more accidents, ac-

cording to his tabulations. This research was nationwide, the most influential newspapers in each state being used. There was a very close fit between front-page publicity to murder and suicide and the plane crashes which came soon after. The crashes, which were commonly multi-fatal, occured in the regions where the stories about murder and suicide had been given prominence. The sociologist concludes:

> The evidence thus suggests that (1) some persons are prompted by newspaper stories to commit murder as well as suicide, and (2) non-commercial planes are sometimes used as instruments of murder and suicide. Taken in conjunction with previous research, the results suggest that the impact of newspaper stories may be at once more general and more grave than was previously expected.

An occult addition to this warning was given many years ago by William Q. Judge in *The Ocean of Theosophy*, where he speaks of executed criminals who are not really "dead," but are "ever rehearsing in *kama loka* their crime, their trial, their execution, and their revenge." He adds: "And whenever they can gain touch with a sensitive living person, medium or not, they attempt to inject thoughts of murder and other crime into the brain of such unfortunate." Quite conceivably, newspaper articles which deal sensationally with murder and suicide open the way to such suggestions from the astral plane.

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